

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

Property Name: East Towson Historic District Inventory Number: BA-2564

Address: Historic district: ☒ yes ☐ no

City: Towson Zip Code: County: Baltimore County

USGS Quadrangle(s): Towson

Property Owner: Tax Account ID Number:

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): Tax Map Number:

Project: Agency: HUD/CD

Agency Prepared By: J. London, HUD/CD

Preparer's Name: Date Prepared: 9/18/1980

Documentation is presented in: federal files

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☒ Eligibility recommended ☐ Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property:

Inventory Number: Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no

Site visit by MHT Staff: ☐ yes ☒ no Name: Date:

Description of Property and Justification: (Please attach map and photo)

No description on DOE form--see Draft NR nomination form in survey notebook for more info.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended ☐

Criteria: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

MHT Comments: Federal DOE

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

B. MacDougal, for Keeper NR

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

Friday, September 26, 1980

Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DRAFTSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

East Towson

AND/OR COMMON

East Towson Historic District

(SURVEY DISTRICT)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

and Railroad Avenues
Virginia, Chesapeake, Pennsylvania

CITY, TOWN

Towson

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Maryland

CODE

024

COUNTY

Baltimore

CODE

005

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☒ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☒ COMMERCIAL☒ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☒ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Multiple, public and private owners (see continuation sheets)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Towson,

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 1

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

Chesapeake Avenue

108	Gary B. Gill
109	
111	James B. Wheatley
113	917 Crommwell Bridge Road
115	Towson, Maryland 21204
112	Milton V. Tripett
114	745 Leafdaye Terrace
	Baltimore, Maryland
116-118	James/Bertha Wheatley
	917 Cromwell Bridge Road
	Towson, Maryland 21204
120	George Banks
110	Milton V. Tripett
133	Robert Williams

Eudowood Lane

345	George T. Bess
	3506 Liberty Heights Avenue
	Baltimore, Maryland 21228
347	George Banks
349	James B. Wheatley
	917 Crommwell Bridge Road
	Towson, Maryland 21204
353	James B. Wheatly, Jr. etal
	908 Crommwell Bridge Road
	Towson, Maryland 21204
355-57	James Wheatley, Jr.
341	Mt. Calvary Church of Baltimore County
	Arron J. Stewart
	402 Fairmount Avenue
	Towson, Maryland 21204
365-67	James B. Wheatley
	917 Crommwell Bridge Road, Towson, Maryland, 21204

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 2

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

Eudowood Lane

351 Maryland Etching Company

Fairmount Avenue

402 Aaron J. Stewart/Lawrence

404 Mollie Richardson

406 Walter A. Johnson/Regina M.

408 Richard J. Hewlett/Regina H.

409 Bessie J. Chatman

411 Hilda Albert Cook

412 Zelma V. Holley

414 Calvin J. Davenport/Dorothy

500 Agnes M. Herrmann
231 Burke Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

Hillen Road

201+ Elijah Gwynn
lot

325 Joseph L.E./Donna G. Mann

327 George M. Pratt
327 Hillen Road
Towson, Maryland 21204

331 Edward B. Mack
333 325 Lennox Avenue
337 Towson, Maryland 21204

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 3

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

Hillen Road

337	Samuel and Rebbeca Arron 416 Charles Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202
343	George and Amy Davis
365	Rodger/Margaret Smith 4402 Craddock Avenue Baltimore, Maryalnd 21212
367	James Wheatly 917 Crommwell Bridge Road Towson, Maryland 21204
369-71	James B. Wheatley 917 Crommwell Bridge Road Towson, Maryland 21204
373-75	James B. Wheatley, Jr. 809 Crommwell Bridge Road Towson, Maryland 21204
377	Edwin Beary
379	Ralph C. Norris 3900 W. Belvedere Avenue Baltimore, Maryland 21218
323	Baltimore County
Jefferson Avenue	
401	Jefferson Avenue Joint Venture 306 W. Chesapeake Avenue
403	Towson, Maryland 21204
405+ lot	Charles Tomes
407	Charlie Tomes/Ella Burke

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #4.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 4

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

409	James E. Tomes
411	United Sons of Towson C/O George Purvinance 25 E. Susquehanna Avenue Towson, Maryland 21204
413-15	Trustees of the St. James Church C/O Rev. Joseph McManus
417	William R. Walker 16720 Hereford Road Monkton, Maryland 21111
419-21	Walter and Sarah Mack
423	William T. Parker/Mary E. Box 54, Route 2 Phoenix, Maryland 21131
Lennox Avenue	
300	Balto. Co. Board of Education Carver Building Aigbith Road Towson, Maryland 21204
301	Otis and Mildred Taylor Box 36, Route 1 Phoenix, Maryland 21131
303	Henrietta Foote 426 North Street Seaford, Delaware 19913
305	Henrietta Foot etal
307	Benjamin W./Martha Davage 16720 Hereford Road Monkton, Maryland 21111

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #5.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 5

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

Lennox Avenue

309	Phebia McNair Taylor
310	William R./Corrin Harvey 17321 Big Falls Road Monkton, Maryland 21111
311	Amos Fields
312	Bernice Cannon/Joan Mason
313	Charles A.E./Edith E. Smith
314	Maude P. Hopkins
315	Clarence P.E. Cather Myers
315B	Thomas Purvines
316	Sara J. Green 1917 Ruxton Avenue Baltimore, Maryland
317	Sammuel C. Williams
318-20	Baltimore County
319	James P. Dyett
321	Alice Mack Johnson
323	Emory Scott/Mary Terrell C/O Deroy Haile, Jr. 13 W. Chesapeake Avenue Towson, Maryland 21204
325	Edward Mack
312-1/2	William E. Johnson

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #6.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 6

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

E. Pennsylvania Avenue

300	William E. Bishop
304	Earnest J.W. Collins
306	Rodger D. Smith
308	Clara Smith
312	Lucretia B. Fisher
318	Marshall Bell, Jr.
320	Francis Johnson
322	Baltimore County
324	William R. Ross/ wife
Lot	Calvin J. Davenport/Dorothy
404-6	Alice H. Johnson 321 Lennox Avenue
405	Agnes Herrman 321 E. Burke Avenue Towson, Maryland 21204
407	Agnes Herrman
409	Agnes Herrman
411	Pride of Towson Elks Lodge #842
Lot	Baltimore Gas & Electric Co.
412	Wallace Hall and wife
413	C.W. Management
414	Calvin J. Davenport

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #7.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 7

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

*Vacant

416 Louis D. Gross
309 Pennsylvania Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

418-20 Kermit C. Norris

Lot Reginald N. Wright
4037 Bille Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland

421 Elizabeth and Aurther Smith

423 Mamie Bradford

425 Laura C. Hook

*429 Sinetta P. Chaney

431-33 Daniel W. Frazier

422 Reginald N. Wright

435 Daniel Frazier

Lot Harriet W. Buchanan

436 Howard E. Powell

437 Jacob H. Wilson

438-40 Howard E. Powell

441 Kathleen Wilson

441A Benjamin A. Wilson

Lot Regina Wilson
373 Hillen Road
Towson, Maryland 21204

430 Edward Crump

432 Mrs. Birdie Sides

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #8.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 8

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

Railroad Avenue

400	Baltimore Gas & Electric Co. Baltimore, Maryland 21202
401	Seaborn B. Turner 4737 Wrenwood Avenue Towson, Maryland 21204
401 1/2	Baltimore Gas & Electric Co. Baltimore, Maryland 21202
402	Anna Ruth Davis
402 1/2	John E. Etzal 89 Sarbit Court Towson, Maryland 21204
403	Baltimore Gas and Electric Co.
404	Leroy Y. Haile 13 W. Chesapeake Avenue Towson, Maryland 21204
405	Baltimore Gas & Electric Co. Baltimore, Maryland 21202
406	Ruby Kenton
407	Baltimore Gas & Electric Co.
408	Herbert H. Rosen 1107 York Road Cockeysville, Maryland 21030
409	Baltimore Gas & Electric Co.
410	Herbert H. Rosen
414	Louis A. Johnson
417	Hattie G. Norris

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #9.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER

4

PAGE

9

OWNER OF PROPERTY (Continued)

Railroad Avenue

419

Clyde D. Young

411

413

415

Baltimore Gas & Electric Co.

Virginia Avenue

400

Baltimore County

402

Baltimore County

404

Eugene A. Jones
406 Virginia Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

405

William C. Roche

407

no address

406

Eugene A. Jones

408

Gladys D. Williams

409

Goldus Hinton

410

Eugene A. Jones/Laura L.
406 Virginia Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

411

William Sadler/Sadie J.

412

James P. Wheatley
917 Crommwell Bridge Road
Towson, Maryland 21204

420

414

424

James P. Wheatley
917 Crommwell Bridge Road
Towson, Maryland 21204

7 DESCRIPTION

BA-2564

DRAFT

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

East Towson is a neighborhood lying one block downhill and to the east of the Baltimore County Courthouse and the main commercial area of Towson. The land slopes gently from west to east. The district is bounded by the western block of Virginia Avenue on the west, Chesapeake Avenue on the south, Pennsylvania Avenue on the north and Railroad Avenue on the east. The area was settled between the 1850s and the 1920s by blacks who were freed slaves or their descendants.

The neighborhood is fairly thoroughly developed with a few duplexes scattered among the predominantly single-family homes. A few lots were never developed and several houses have been torn down, so that some open spaces are now interspersed with the houses.

Generous lot sizes provide a relaxed setting for the houses in East Towson. Each house benefits from at least a small front yard and usually a deep back yard, often with side yards as well. Some houses are supplemented by a garage. The yards are well-tended, featuring attractive groupings of perennials and shrubs. A picket fence or neat hedge encloses each yard, creating a scenic border to the street. Some blocks are edged with sidewalks. The numerous trees lend a cool shady air to the neighborhood.

The majority of houses in East Towson are owner-occupied and are maintained in excellent condition. The ones which are rented show more care by the tenant than by the landlord. Most alterations to the buildings appear in the form of additions to the rear, which do not detract from the original appearance of the houses.

Two log houses remain in East Towson, #423 Jefferson Avenue (BA-1042) and the rear section of #437 Pennsylvania Avenue (BA-1061). The other houses are of frame construction, usually built over a stone cellar. All the houses in East Towson are two stories in height with the exceptions of #435 Pennsylvania Avenue (BA-1060), a "shotgun shack" usually seen further south, and 402 1/2 Railroad Avenue (Ba-1071). Six compatible, mid-twentieth century, one-story houses also appear.

Some houses retain their original wood siding, while others have been covered with asphalt or asbestos shingles, or aluminum siding. Since the houses and their settings remain intact and these later sheathing materials are subdued in color, the integrity of the houses is not violated and the appearance of the community remains harmonious.

Two basic types of facade face the street: the wide, usually cross-gabled facade of a house with center hall plan, or the narrow gable end of a house running two or three rooms deep into the lot. Almost every house is shaded by a front porch, whether a simple shed supported by plain square posts, or a stylish, semi-enclosed porch sporting turned posts and carry brackets.

See Continuation Sheet #10

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County,

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 10

DESCRIPTION (continued)

These two basic floor plans, the narrow side-hall and the wide center-hall type, were built simultaneously throughout the history of East Towson. The difference in types must reflect the financial status of the owner rather than a change in style. The detailing found in these houses ranges from mid-nineteenth century holdovers (423 Jefferson Ave: BA-1042), to late Victorian styling (405 Pennsylvania Avenue: BA-1021 and 308 Pennsylvania Avenue: BA-1046), to a cross between late Queen Anne eclecticism and early Colonial Revival (406 Fairmount Avenue: BA-1017 and 314 Lennox Avenue: BA-1028).

The appearance of this area has changed little since the last major area, Fairmount and Lennox Avenues, was developed circa 1906-1915. The earliest houses, from the mid-nineteenth century, appear in the extreme eastern and western sections of the district. A few houses which appear on an 1877 map of Towson are extant, most notably #423 Jefferson Avenue (BA-1042). Five per cent of the present houses in East Towson are from this period. The Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York Railroad ran through Towson in the mid-1800's crossing Chesapeake Avenue at Jefferson, and passing by the southern foot of Railroad Avenue.

By 1898 all streets except Fairmount and Lennox were lightly developed. The houses from this period represent 25% of the extant houses in East Towson. In 1881 several institutions which still exist were built, including the Towsontown Lodge, #411 Jefferson (BA-1003), and the St. James AUMP Church and parsonage, #415 Pennsylvania (BA-1000) and #413 Pennsylvania Avenue (BA-1001), respectively. Several buildings of the Beneficial Society at the foot of Eudowood Lane appear on the 1898 map,

The greatest spurt of development occurred between 1898 and 1915, when 45% of the present houses were built. Both Lennox and Fairmount Avenues were developed and many houses were built in other parts of the district. Twenty percent more of the houses were built between 1915 and 1927, bringing the total percentage of pre-1927 structures in the district to 95%.

Few commercial structures are located in the East Towson neighborhood. The Towson Auto Body Garage, #110 Chesapeake, is only barely visible from the street. The Maryland Etching Company (BA-1076) is housed in a large building constructed in 1946 at the eastern end of Eudowood Lane. Despite the size of the building, it does not detract from the neighborhood, thanks to its peripheral location and attractive form. The single

See Continuation Sheet #11

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County,

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 11

DESCRIPTION (continued)

major intrusion in the district is the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company transformer station on the western side of Railroad Avenue.

Local religious, social and educational institutions include the aforementioned St. James AUMP Church and the Towsontown Lodge. Another church, the Mt. Calvary A.M.E., was built recently at the end of Eudowood Lane. The Pride of Towson Lodge is located at #411 Pennsylvania Avenue (BA-1055). The Baltimore County Board of Education has offices in the 1908 Carver School at Jefferson and Lennox Avenues (BA-1075). Adjoining the old school, the Carver Playground is a small park about 1/4 city block in size. It provides attractive recreational space for the neighborhood.

East Towson is bounded on the east by light manufacturing, on the north by residential and commercial development, on the west by the commercial York Road area, and on the south by a mid-twentieth century residential community.

The following are six typical houses in East Towson:

413 Jefferson Avenue -AUMP Parsonage (BA-100) - 1881 and 1906

The front cross-gabled section of this two-story frame house is an addition to a four-room house. The steep cross-gable contains a triangular window. Now attached to the St. James AUMP Church, the parsonage was once separated by an alley.

415 Jefferson Avenue - St. James AUMP Church (BA-1000) - 1881 and 1906

This frame church was first built in 1881 and was raised to two stories in 1906. The pulpit, chancel and choir loft on the second floor are from the first building.

423 Jefferson Avenue - (BA-1042) - 3rd quarter 19th century

This two-story log house is one of the oldest buildings in the East Towson neighborhood. The two front rooms each contain a fireplace backing on the central wall. The stair also runs along this wall. A kitchen to the rear has a fireplace along its west wall. All the fireplace mantels are composed of moldings dating from the third quarter of the 19th century.

See Continuation Sheet #12

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County,

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 12

DESCRIPTION (continued)

314 Lennox Avenue - (BA-1028) - circa 1905 - 1915

This unusual and stylish frame house consists of north-south and east-west gambrel roofs which cross at the center of the building. Each side of the house appears as a gambrel end. The interior of the house retains elaborate original woodwork.

405 Pennsylvania Avenue - (BA-1021) - before 1898

This attractive frame house retains much of its original woodwork. The house is two stories high and consists of two rooms across the front with a stair along the center wall. Several additions follow to the rear. The main facade is distinguished by a porch and a cross gable.

312 Pennsylvania Avenue - (BA-1047) - before 1898

This fine house, is large and elaborately finished. (It is similar to its neighbor, 308 Pennsylvania BA-1046.) It consists of a side stair hall and parlor followed by two rooms, one large kitchen, a shed addition and a porch. A front porch wraps around the west side. The two-story frame house is two bays wide by five bays deep, with much elaborate exterior woodwork.

St. James African Union Methodist Protestant Church - (BA-1000)

This church was first built as a one-story building in 1881. In 1906 it was raised to its present 2 1/2 story form. The paneled choir loft and balustraded chancel were moved to the second floor with the sanctuary, and the first floor is now used for informal gatherings and service facilities.

The church is basically of frame construction on a foundation of local stone. A summer beam in the first floor ceiling is supported by flared, cast iron posts. The church's exterior is covered in grey asbestos shingles.

An exterior flight of steps rises to the main central doors, which lead to a landing slightly above the first floor level. From here a wide flight of stairs rises to the second floor. The double doors at the head of the stairs are said to be the front doors from the original church. Each door features a glass panel over a small wooden panel with cut-in corners.

See Continuation Sheet #13

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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East Towson Historic District
Baltimore County,

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 13

DESCRIPTION (continued)

The second floor plan includes the pastor's office in the south-east corner and a small room with a winding stair to the balcony in the northeast corner. The balcony surmounts these rooms. In the sanctuary, three rows of pews are divided by two aisles. Behind the chancel is a raised pulpit and choir loft. An alcove projects from the center of the rear wall and contains a religious painting. The four windows along the north and south sides rise in Gothic arches with stained glass in the upper sections.

The main, or east, facade of the St. James AUMP Church presents a well-planned composition. To the south, a Gothic-arched window lights each floor. There is an identical window on the north of the second floor. Beneath this window an awning-sheltered door leads to the first floor. This door is painted red, with four black horizontal panels. The central double doors each contain six black panels surrounded by red rails and stiles. A four-pane transom tops the door. Resting directly on this framework are two windows surmounted by a wide, stained glass Gothic arch.

A cast-iron bell, with the inscription "Andrew Menedy, West Troy, N.Y. 1845" cast in the metal, once sat in a bell tower in the church's east-west running gable. It now rests on a concrete platform to the south of the church.

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PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 100-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Black History

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

"Following the Civil War, many communities of freed black men appeared in Maryland. These . . . were often developed from farm land purchased by one or more of the freed men. In some instances, the land was given by whites. [Some of] these communities exist today as enclaves . . . besieged by encroaching urbanization . . . urban renewal . . . has dealt the death blow to many of these communities in rural areas. Regulations for minimum lot sizes, sanitation and the like, have passed almost insurmountable barriers to the new generation of younger blacks who would prefer to remain on lands that have been held by their families for several generations. These families would usually be considered poor, but they have a great deal of pride in land ownership and family traditions. However, the outlook is bleak for the continuation of such communities."

The above, from a letter by Carroll Greene of the Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and and Culture, is a general description of the historic and present condition of black communities in Maryland such as East Towson. Although its origins are based in the antebellum period, East Towson's greatest growth occurred from circa 1870 to circa 1920. In the 1970s properties are still owned, in many cases, by descendants of the families who built them. The district remains as a largely unaltered example of the late 19th and early 20th century architecture and society found in such black communities. It is different from these others only relatively, being either less affluent or holding on longer than many of its counterparts.

Several factors contribute to the architectural cohesiveness of the East Towson Historic District. With few exceptions, all the houses were built within a 75-year period. Due to discrimination and lack of money, these buildings were constructed by a few local builders within the East Towson community. Again due to lack of money, almost all the houses show modified styling rather than many distinctive designs. The properties are, for the most part, set among trees in neat lots, and the houses themselves show few modern modifications. The rural, early 20th century nature of the community is distinctly defined by modern development on all sides, while there is almost no modern development within the district itself.

The East Towson community dates from September 14, 1853, when "Daniel Harris purchased an acre and a quarter of land from the Benjamin Payne

See Continuation Sheet #14

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DRAFT

East Towson Historic District

Baltimore County,

CONTINUATION SHEET

Maryland

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

14

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

family for the sum of \$187.50." (Deed HMF 6/264). Located near the roadway now known as Hillen Road, this purchase is the first documented evidence of black landholdings in the Towson community.

The people who then moved into this area can trace their origins to Hampton, the plantation of Captain Charles Ridgely. Hampton was the center of a landholding which began with 1,500 acres and eventually grew to include 10,000 acres from Jones Falls to Timonium. In addition Ridgely's properties included another 5,000-acre tract in the area now known as Whitemarsh.

Captain Ridgely's will was to play an important part in the settlement of blacks in the Towson area. In a codicil to that document, dated 28 April 1828, he made provisions for the care and treatment of the slaves in his possession at his death, as well as for any future children these slaves might have. He decreed that slaves older than 45 would be passed on to certain designated heirs, who were charged to treat them with care and consideration. Male slaves between the ages of 28 and 45 were to be considered free upon Captain Ridgely's death. Male slaves under 28 were to be set free when they reached that age, and female slaves were to be given their freedom at age 25. All children of the former slaves were also to be freed upon reaching these ages.

Captain Ridgely's death in 1830 created a population of free blacks in the Towson area some thirty-five years before the end of the Civil War. Disinclined to travel because of lack of funds and the social restrictions of the times, this group of free blacks formed the nucleus of East Towson and two other black communities which were at one time a part of Towson. A number of East Towson residents can trace their lineage back to this group of slaves manumitted by Captain Ridgely.

There is little documented social history of Towson's involvement in the Civil War. The recollections of a former Towson resident indicate that at that time it was not considerably damaged. Miss Mary Stieber cites two instances of the effects of the war: the pillaging of stores and businesses on York Road and a physical skirmish with the Union Army, where shots were fired, but no one was hurt.

Following the Civil War, the Freedmen's Bureau (which had a 12-year life span from 1865-77) made some effort to assist Towson's freed blacks. The lumber for the erection of the first "colored" school in 1867 was donated by the Bureau. The passage of the 15th amendment

See Continuation Sheet #15

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Baltimore County,

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE 15

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

in 1870 gave black males in the border states the voting franchise. In an election for town commissioner, held in Towson April 4, 1870, thirty-seven black males voted out of a total of 187 voters casting ballots. This was the first election held in Maryland after passage of the amendment.

In the latter half of the 19th century, a number of socio-cultural groups and institutions were formed. These included: St. James African Union Methodist Protestant Church, founded on October 17, 1861 (this was the second church founded in Towson, the first being Epsom Chapel); a black relief society founded in 1883; and the organization of Odd Fellows and the sister group known as the House of Ruth. The founding and flourishing of these organizations attested to the growth in size of the black population of East Towson, and land records point to the ownership of property by additional black families.

Baltimore County and Towson retained much of a rural and village quality through the 1800s and most of the first half of the 20th century. In Towson, at that time, large tracts were owned by wealthy white families who maintained summer homes here and spent the winters in Baltimore. York Road was the center of the business community, and small in scale. After World War II, technology, government policy and racial feelings combined to create massive urban flight, which resulted in the development of Towson as a regional center. In this process the East Towson community has been encroached upon from all sides by modern construction.

In 1977 wide-spread interest in preservation has developed in East Towson. Little has been done in the way of restoration and preservation in the past because of vast uncertainty about the future of the community. Residents have indicated a desire and a willingness to upgrade their properties and to undertake other preservation activities, once they are assured that such efforts will not be in vain, and that they ultimately will not be displaced by plans for a major roadway.





BA- 2564

BA- 2564

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approximately 37 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A  B 
C  D 
ZONE EASTING NORTHING ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Merry Stinson, architectural historian/Marcus Pollock, volunteer	
ORGANIZATION	DATE
	coordinator

ORGANIZATION

Towson Family YMCA

DATE _____

~~volunteer~~
coordinator

STREET & NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson,

STATE

Maryland 21204

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____

STATE _____

LOCAL _____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE _____

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE _____

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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East Towson Historic District

Baltimore County,

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 16

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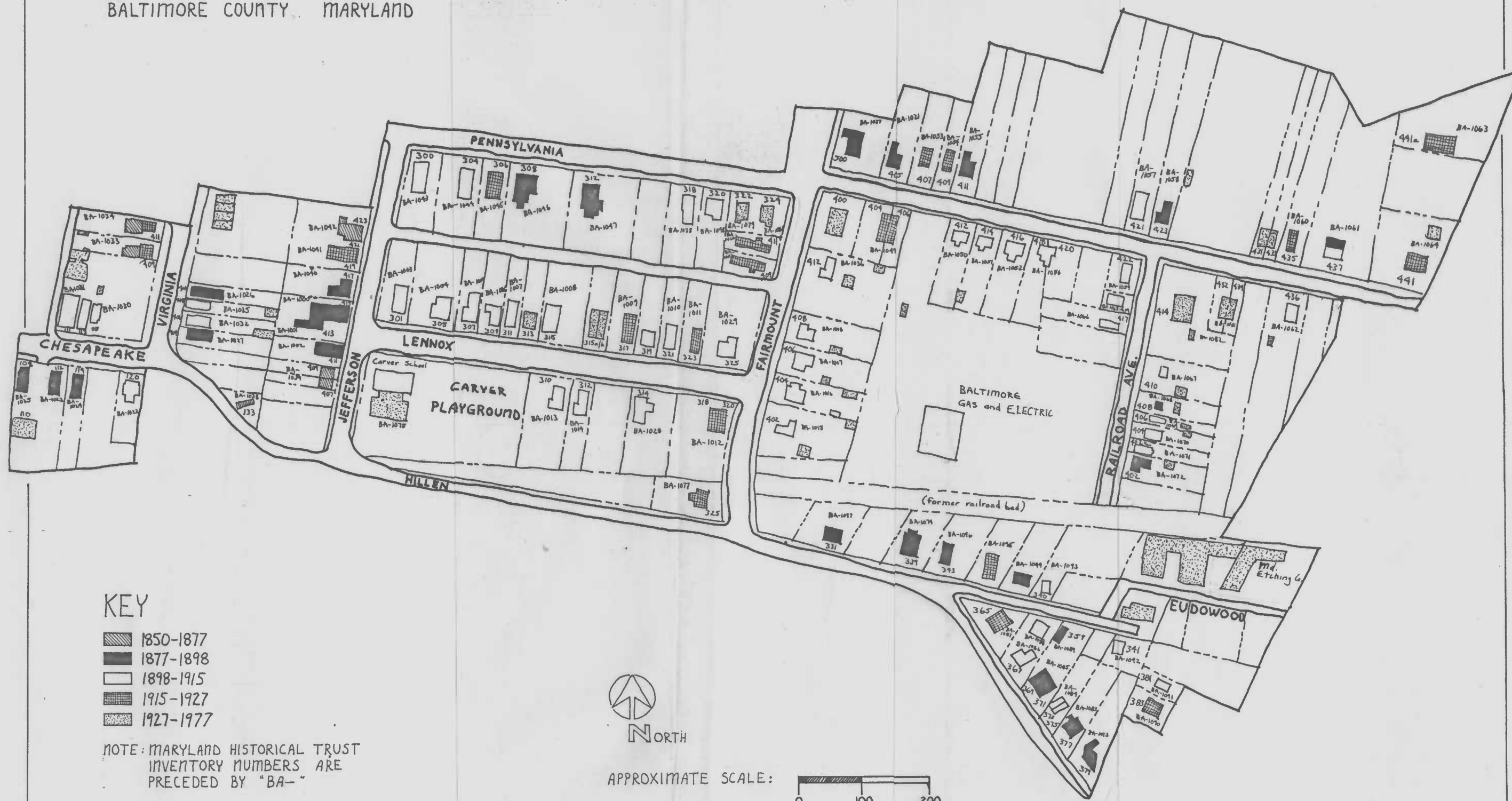
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EAST TOWSON

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

HISTORIC DISTRICT

EA-2564



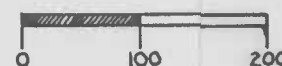
KEY

- 1850-1877
- 1877-1898
- 1898-1915
- 1915-1927
- 1927-1977

NOTE: MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
INVENTORY NUMBERS ARE
PRECEDED BY "BA-"



APPROXIMATE SCALE:



W. K. H. 11/2/77

M. STINSON 7/77



TOWSON
Quad

East Towson
Historic District

39° 22' 30"
76° 37' 30"

CONTRIBUTING		RESOURCE	
MARYLAND	HISTORICAL	TRUST	
INTERNAL	NR-ELIGIBILITY	REVIEW	FORM

Property Name: 422 East Pennsylvania Avenue Survey Number: BA-2564

Property Address: 422 East Pennsylvania Ave., Towson, Maryland, Baltimore County

Project: Rehabilitation of 422 East Pennsylvania Ave Agency: BA Co/CDBG

Site visit by MHT Staff: X no yes Name Date

District Name: East Towson Historic District Survey Number: ~~BA-1059~~ BA-2564 JF

<u> </u>	Listed	X	Eligible	Formal	DOE	9/26/80	Comment

Criteria: X A B X C D Considerations: A B C D E F G None

The resource X contributes/___ does not contribute to the historic significance of this historic district in:

 X Location X Design X Setting X Materials

Workmanship X Feeling X Association

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

East Towson, a largely residential neighborhood, was settled by freed slaves and thier descendants and dates from the 1850s to the 1920s. The houses are simple, vernacular examples of common house types of the period. The frame, gable-end house with front porch retains its original wood shingles and is distinguished by imbricated shingles in the front gable. The house contributes to the district in design, location, setting, materials and feeling.

Documentation on the property is presented in: Project file

Prepared by: _____

Elizabeth Hannold	January 13, 1992
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Date

NR program concurrence: yes no not applicable

Reviewer, NR program

1. 14-93

Date

[Handwritten signature]

Survey No. BA- 2564

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

☐ Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
☐ Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles,
Prince George's and St. Mary's)
☒ Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll,
Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
☐ Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

☐ Paleo-Indian 10000-7500 B.C.
☐ Early Archaic 7500-6000 B.C.
☐ Middle Archaic 6000-4000 B.C.
☐ Late Archaic 4000-2000 B.C.
☐ Early Woodland 2000-500 B.C.
☐ Middle Woodland 500 B.C. - A.D. 900
☐ Late Woodland/Archaic A.D. 900-1600
☐ Contact and Settlement A.D. 1570-1750
☐ Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
☐ Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
☒ Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
☐ Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present
☐ Unknown Period (☐ prehistoric ☐ historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

☐ Subsistence
☐ Settlement
☐ Political
☐ Demographic
☐ Religion
☐ Technology
☐ Environmental Adaption

IV. Historic Period Themes:

☐ Agriculture
☒ Architecture, Landscape Architecture,
and Community Planning
☐ Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
☐ Government/Law
☐ Military
☐ Religion
☐ Social/Educational/Cultural
☐ Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Dwelling

Known Design Source: Unknown

76°37'30"

910,000 FT

Joins Map 19

BA-2564

76°35'00"



BA-2564



422 East Pennsylvania
Towson, Md. Ave.



South side of Pennsylvania Ave. east of
Jefferson Ave.

BA-1046, 1045, 1044, 1043

Towson, Md.

Merry Stinson
1977

BA-2564



west side of Jefferson Ave. at Lennox
BA-1000, 1040, 1041, 1042
Towson, Md.

Merry Stinson
1977

BA-2564



west side of Jefferson Ave. at Lennox
BA-1039, 1002, 1000, 1040, 1041, 1042
Towson, Md.

Merry Stinson
1977

BA-2564

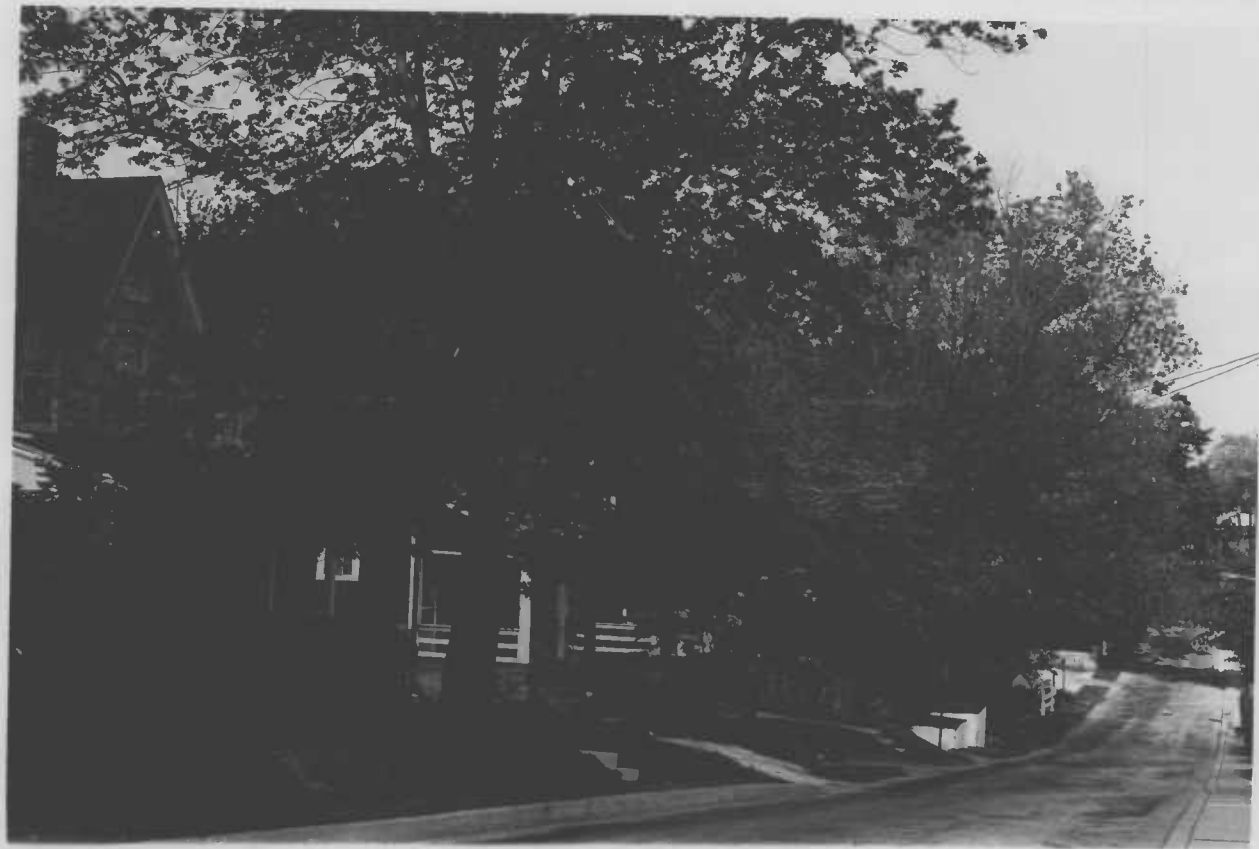


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BA-2564



BA-2564



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